



Current Testing Guidelines for Maine State Lab

The Maine CDC recently shared the following information on the [Maine CDC's Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) webpage](#).

Testing at state lab (HETL) as of March 25, 2020. Maine now meets U.S. CDC's criteria for a Moderate level of community transmission. At present, a limited national supply of laboratory materials inhibits Maine's testing capacity. Therefore, consistent with U.S. CDC guidelines, Maine is now creating a prioritization system to test individuals in high-risk categories.

To preserve Maine's specimen collection and testing supplies for patients who may develop severe COVID-19 illness over the coming months, effective immediately, Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL) will prioritize testing to high-risk individuals and will only accept specimens for testing from symptomatic individuals who have fever or respiratory symptoms and who fall into one of the following high-risk categories:

Tier 1:

- Those who are hospitalized
- Health care workers
- First responders (e.g., EMS Police, Fire)
- Patients living in congregate setting (e.g., LTCFs, group homes, assisted living facilities, jails, shelters)

Tier 2:

- Patients older than 60 years
- Patients with underlying medical conditions

Testing within these categories is likely to be prioritized further based on availability of laboratory materials. Presently the emphasis will be on groups within Tier 1. This guidance is in general accordance with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recommendations for prioritizing COVID-19 testing for individuals.

Note:

- Samples sent to HETL that do not have completed paperwork or that do not meet one of the above criteria will be discarded.
- Samples from individuals who do not fall into any of these six categories should be sent to a commercial laboratory.

Please visit the [Maine CDC's Novel Coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) webpage](#) and [MaineCare's Covid-19 \(Coronavirus\) webpage](#) often. Information is added daily. MaineCare providers can contact us through our [COVID-19 email box](#).